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Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1 to 9. (previously withdrawn)

10. (currently amended) A rod doctor suitable for metering an amount of a coating mix applied to a surface of a moving web of board or paper, or to an applicator roll surface of a film-transfer coater, and for leveling the applied coat, comprising:

a support frame having a cradle formed therein; **and**

a rod positioned in the cradle of said support so as to be capable of rotating therein, a surface of the cradle on which said rod rotates ~~being covered by a~~ **having a coating** surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of the cradle and said rod.

11. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein a surface of the rod ~~is covered by a~~ **has a coating** surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of said rod.

12. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer has a thickness of from 1 nm to 90 μm.

13. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers have a thickness of from 1 nm to 90 μm.

14. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

15. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

16. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

17. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

18. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is comprised of diamond.

19. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are comprised of diamond.

20. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is comprised of diamond.

21. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are comprised of diamond.

22. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is comprised of chromium.

23. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are comprised of chromium.

24. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is comprised of chromium.

25. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are comprised of chromium.

26. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer is comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.

27. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers are comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.

28. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer is comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.

29. (previously added) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers are comprised of a chromium-teflon composition.

30. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

31. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

32. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

33. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

34. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 14, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

35. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 15, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

36. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 18, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

37. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 19, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

38. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 22, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

39. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 23, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

40. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 26, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

41. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 27, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

42. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 10, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

43. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 11, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

44. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 12, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

45. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 13, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

46. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 14, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

47. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 15, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

48. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 18, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

49. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 19, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

50. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 22, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

51. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 23, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

52. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 26, wherein the surface layer ~~is~~ was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

53. (currently amended) The rod doctor of claim 27, wherein the surface layers ~~are~~ were applied using a thermal spraying technique.

54. (new) A rod doctor suitable for metering an amount of a coating mix applied to a surface of a moving web of board or paper, or to an applicator roll surface of a film-transfer coater, and for leveling the applied coat, comprising:

a support frame having a cradle formed therein;

a rod positioned in the cradle of said support so as to be capable of rotating therein, a surface of the cradle on which said rod rotates being covered by a surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of the cradle and said rod , the surface layer being comprised of a silicon-molybdenum alloy.

55. (new) The rod doctor of claim 54, wherein a surface of the rod is covered by a surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of said rod.

56. (new) The rod doctor of claim 54, wherein the surface layer has a thickness of from 1 nm to 90 μm.

57. (new) The rod doctor of claim 55, wherein the surface layers have a thickness of from 1 nm to 90 μm.

58. (new) The rod doctor of claim 55, wherein at least one of the surface layers was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

59. (new) The rod doctor of claim 55, wherein at least one of the surface layers was applied using a thermal spraying technique.

60. (new) A rod doctor suitable for metering an amount of a coating mix applied to a surface of a moving web of board or paper, or to an applicator roll surface of a film-transfer coater, and for leveling the applied coat, comprising:

a support frame having a cradle formed therein;

a rod positioned in the cradle of said support so as to be capable of rotating therein, a surface of the cradle on which said rod rotates being covered by a surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of the cradle and said rod, wherein the surface layer is comprised of diamond.

61. (new) The rod doctor of claim 60, wherein a surface of the rod is covered by a surface layer of a material which improves wear resistance and sliding friction properties of said rod.

62. (new) The rod doctor of claim 60, wherein the surface layer has a thickness of from 1 nm to 90 μm.

63. (new) The rod doctor of claim 61, wherein the surface layers have a thickness of from 1 nm to 90 μm.

64. (new) The rod doctor of claim 61, wherein at least one of the surface layers was applied using a vacuum deposition technique.

65. (new) The rod doctor of claim 61, wherein at least one of the surface layers was applied using a thermal spraying technique.